AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1.   (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

generating an electronic data file including configuration information; [[and]]

transmitting the electronic data file including the configuration information to an appliance, [[wherein the appliance already has instructions stored on a storage medium thereof to reconfigure the appliance based on the received electronic data file,]] the electronic data file to cause the appliance to be [[automatically]] reconfigured based on the configuration information; and

receiving an electronic data file indicating whether or not the reconfiguration of the appliance was successful.

2.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the configuration information comprises configuration information in a markup language.

3.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 2, wherein the configuration information comprises configuration information in XML.

4.   (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic data file is embedded in an email, and further comprising:

encrypting the electronic data file prior to sending it to the appliance.

Claims 5-7 (Cancelled)

8.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 further comprising:

allowing access through a firewall to a particular IP address in response to receiving the electronic data file.

9.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8 further comprising:

allowing the particular IP address to modify the appliance through an interactive session.

10.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 further comprising:

authenticating the electronic data file by the appliance.

11.   (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

receiving an email including configuration information at an appliance [[that already has instructions stored on a storage medium thereof to reconfigure the appliance based on the configuration information]]; and

reconfiguring the appliance based on the configuration information when the appliance is idle.

12.   (Original) The method of claim 11 further comprising:

decrypting the email.

13   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 11 further comprising:

authenticating the configuration information.

14.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13 further comprising:

allowing access through a firewall to a particular IP address responsive to receiving the email.

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15.   (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The method of claim 14 further comprising:

allowing access by the particular [[IF]]_IP address to the appliance via an interactive menu.

16   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, wherein the interactive menu is part of a browser.

17.   (Original) The method of claim 11 further comprising:

sending a confirmation email indicating that the appliance was reconfigured successfully.

18.   (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

entering configuration information using an application running on a machine;

sending an email including the configuration information to each of a group of appliances at [[substantially]] the same time to consistently configure the group of appliances.

19.   (Original) The method of claim 18 further comprising:

encrypting the configuration information in the email.

20.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 19 further comprising:

the [[multiple]] group of appliances authenticating the email; and

reconfiguring the [[multiple]] group of appliances based on the configuration information after said authenticating.

Claims 21-28 (Cancelled)

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29   (Currently Amended) An article comprising:

a storage medium which stores instructions, the instructions when executed, causing systems to:

receive an electronic data file including configuration information; and

reconfigure an appliance <u>selected from the group consisting of a router and a server</u> based on the configuration information included in the electronic data file, <u>wherein said reconfiguring the appliance comprises modifying an application program</u>.

30.   (Currently Amended) The article of claim 29, wherein the storage medium further comprises instructions[[, the instructions,]] <u>that</u> when executed[[,]] cause <u>the</u> systems to:

decrypt the electronic data file.

31.   (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The article of claim 29, wherein the storage medium further comprises instructions[[, the instructions,]] <u>that</u> when executed[[,]] cause <u>the</u> systems to:

authenticate the configuration information.

32.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said transmitting comprises transmitting to a plurality of appliances at the same time to keep the plurality of appliances consistently configured.

33.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said transmitting comprises transmitting to an appliance selected from a router and a server, and wherein said generating

comprises generating an electronic data file including configuration information to reconfigure an application program.

34.   (New) The method of claim 11, wherein said receiving the email at the appliance comprises receiving the email at an appliance selected from a router and a server.

35.   (New) The method of claim 11, further comprising sending an electronic data file indicating whether or not the reconfiguration was successful.

36.   (New) The method of claim 11, wherein said reconfiguring the appliance comprises modifying an application program.

37.   (New) The method of claim 36, wherein said modifying the application program comprises modifying an operating system.

38.   (New) The method of claim 18, further comprising receiving an electronic data file indicating whether or not reconfiguration of an appliance of the group was successful.

39.   (New) The method of claim 18, wherein said entering the configuration information comprises entering configuration to modify an operating system of an appliance selected from a router and a server.

40.   (New) The article of claim 29, wherein the instructions that when executed cause the systems to modify the application program further comprise instructions that when executed cause the systems to:

modify an operating system.

41.   (New) The article of claim 29, wherein the storage medium further comprises instructions that when executed cause the systems to:

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send an email indicating whether or not reconfiguration of an appliance of the group was successful.

42.   (New) The article of claim 29, wherein the instructions that when executed cause the systems to reconfigure the appliance further comprise instructions that when executed cause the systems to:

reconfigure the appliance when the appliance is idle.